

# WHAT IS AN ACTIVITY CENTER?

Continued commercial development is vitally important to Sugar Land from both an economic perspective as well as the civic services and amenities it provides to residents and visitors. Mixed-use development is a critical factor in maintaining the city's ability to continue to provide first-rate city services at one of the lowest property tax rates in the state. The success of Sugar Land Town Square is a model for future walkable mixed-use Regional and Neighborhood Activity Centers.

- An activity center is an area with a mix of uses, such as office, retail, residential and civic institutions, integrated together in a compact walkable area. The draft Plan identifies two types of activity centers: Regional Activity Centers (RACs) and Neighborhood Activity Centers (NACs) (See **Goal 2**).
- The draft Plan identifies five areas as RACs strategically located along regional highways to ensure intense commercial, retail and other high-traffic destinations are contained within designated areas and separated from single-family residential neighborhoods. Each RAC is intended to have its own unique identity providing different amenities for both residents and employees for entertainment, dining and shopping (See **Goal 2, Policy a**).
- The draft Plan identifies nine areas as NACs located on arterial streets, which are envisioned to be small mixed-use centers that act as a "Main Street" for nearby neighborhoods. These will largely be created through the redevelopment of older commercial areas and will minimize impacts on adjacent single-family neighborhoods by providing buffers and smooth transitions (See **Goal 2, Policy b**).





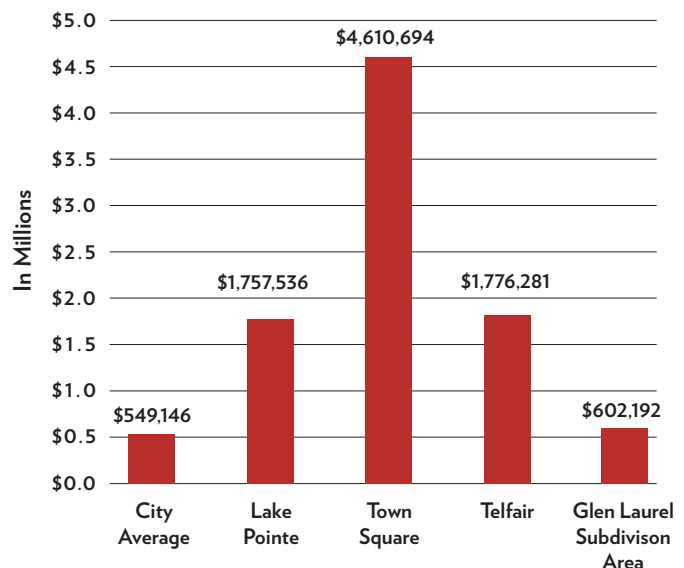
## What are the Benefits to Having Activity Centers?

- Activity Centers provide public spaces for people to gather informally and hold major civic events. They also provide appropriate locations for destination venues such as the Smart Financial Centre at Sugar Land.
- Mixing uses in Activity Centers increases overall mobility and reduces traffic congestion by allowing people to walk, bike or drive to these locations, park once and visit multiple destinations in one trip.
- Commercial property provides both sales and property tax revenues that form the core of the city's budget and are essential to maintaining the city's low tax rate. Without these revenues, residents would have to pay higher property taxes to maintain high quality services. However, by allowing commercial development, the city has been able to lower the property tax rate by more than 18 cents since 1993 and maintains one of the lowest property tax rates in the state today.
- Of all commercial properties, high quality mixed use Activity Centers yield the highest taxable value per acre. For example, Town Square has the highest value per acre in the city: over eight times the city average taxable value per acre.

*“These places provide a great gathering place and mix of activities for all ages. All of these places draw a new level of flair, wider scope of activities and larger number of visitors to Sugar Land.”*

— Erum Jivani  
Land Use Advisory Committee

**2016 Taxable Value Per Acre**



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